

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A system for switching between a plurality of video cameras, the
2 system comprising:
3 a camera controller for controlling the plurality of video cameras;
4 a plurality of addressable power switches, wherein each addressable power
5 switch is coupled to and controls power applied to a corresponding video camera;
6 an output device capable of receiving a video signal from any of the
7 plurality of video cameras and configured to output the video signal received; and
8 a switch controller controlled by the camera controller for addressing the
9 plurality of addressable power switches.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the switch controller controls
2 application of power to the plurality of video cameras such that power is applied to a
3 single video camera at a time.
- 1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein switch controller includes a
2 wireless transmitter, and wherein the addressable power switches includes wireless
3 receivers.
- 1 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the wireless transmitter is
2 configured to transmit radio frequency signals to the wireless receivers, and wherein the
3 wireless receivers are configured to receive radio frequency signals from the wireless
4 transmitter.
- 1 5. The system of claim 1, wherein the switch controller is integrated
2 into the camera controller.

1 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the camera controller is integrated
2 into customer premises equipment that is communicatively coupled to a cable network.

1 7. The system of claim 1, wherein a camera control process provides
2 commands from remote access controllers to the camera controller.

1 8. The system of claim 7, wherein an authentication process limits
2 commands accepted to only authorized commands.

1 9. The system of claim 7, wherein an encryption process provides
2 security to video signals transmitted from the camera controller to a remote access
3 controller.

1 10. The system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of video cameras
2 comprise wireless transmitters for sending video signals to the output device, and wherein
3 the output device comprises a wireless receiver for receiving video signals from the
4 plurality of video cameras.

1 11. A camera controller for controlling a plurality of video cameras,
2 the camera controller comprising:

3 a memory configured with a camera control process;

4 a communication bus coupled to the memory for transmitting command
5 codes from the camera control process; and

6 a switch controller coupled to the communication bus for receiving the
7 command codes,

8 wherein the switch controller is configured to use the command codes to
9 control a plurality of addressable power switches that control application of power to the
10 plurality of video cameras.

1 12. The camera controller of claim 11, wherein the memory is further
2 configured with an authentication process for authenticating remote commands to control
3 the plurality of cameras.

1 13. The camera controller of claim 12, wherein the memory is further
2 configured with an encryption process to securely transmit video from the camera
3 controller to a requesting controller.

1 14. The camera controller of claim 11, wherein the switch controller
2 comprises a wireless transmitter for transmitting control signals to the plurality of
3 addressable power switches.

1 15. The camera controller of claim 14, wherein the switch controller
2 comprises a decoder for decoding the command codes to generate the control signals.

1 16. The camera controller of claim 11, wherein the camera controller is
2 incorporated into a set top box.

1 17. The camera controller of claim 11, wherein the camera controller is
2 provided as part of customer premises equipment that is configured to transmit video over
3 a cable network.

1 18. The camera controller of claim 11, wherein the camera controller is
2 provided as part of customer premises equipment that is configured to transmit video over
3 an Internet.

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4 19. A method for monitoring a plurality of video cameras, the method
5 comprising:
6 processing a command to view images from a particular camera of the
7 plurality of video cameras to determine if the command is authorized;
8 if the command is authorized, then generating a control code and
9 communicating the control code to a power switch controller;
10 decoding the control code to generate control signals, wherein the control
11 signals are configured such that power is applied to a single video camera at a time; and
12 transmitting the control signals to a plurality of addressable power
13 switches, wherein each addressable power switch is coupled to and controls power
14 applied to a corresponding video camera.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the transmitting occurs by
2 sending signals over AC power lines that provide power the video cameras and the power
3 switch controller.

1 21. The method of claim 19, wherein the transmitting occurs by
2 sending control signals over a radio-frequency carrier from the power switch controller to
3 the addressable power switches.

1 21. The method of claim 19, wherein the plurality of cameras are
2 placed about a premises of a customer.

1 22. The method of claim 21, wherein the command is received from a
2 local system within the premises of the customer.

1 23. The method of claim 21, wherein the command is received from a
2 remote system outside the premises of the customer.

1 24. A system for switching between a plurality of video cameras, the
2 system comprising:
3 means for processing a command to view images from a particular camera
4 of the plurality of video cameras to determine if the command is authorized;
5 means for generating a control code and for communicating the control
6 code to a power switch controller if the command is authorized;
7 means for decoding the control code to generate control signals; and
8 means for transmitting the control signals to a plurality of addressable
9 power switches,
10 wherein each addressable power switch is coupled to and controls power
11 applied to a corresponding video camera, and
12 wherein the control signals are configured such that power is applied to a
13 single video camera at a time.

1 25. A method for providing access to a plurality of video cameras, the
2 method comprising:
3 receiving a command from a requestor to view images from a particular
4 camera of the plurality of video cameras, wherein the command as received is encrypted
5 using a private key of the requestor;
6 decrypting the command by using a public key of the requestor to
7 determine if the command is authentic;
8 processing the command to determine if the command is authorized;
9 if the command is authentic and authorized, then a) encrypting a video
10 signal from the particular camera by using the public key such that the requestor may

- 11 decrypt the video signal using the private key and b) transmitting the encrypted video
- 12 signal to the requestor.